

AOSCA Quality Assurance (QA) Program



PURPOSE

The AOSCA Quality Assurance (QA) program provides a uniform and unbiased quality control system and marketing tool for crop seeds merchandised as varieties, hybrids, brands, or blends.

OBJECTIVES

1. To provide coordinated, professional, unbiased field inspections, laboratory testing and post control grow outs for quality control in seed production, conditioning and marketing.
2. To provide an unbiased record system for use in meeting state and federal seed law requirements, for use in assessing royalties or research fees; and to help solve potential problems with customers and seed suppliers.
3. To provide a retail or wholesale marketing image of sound quality control assurance for selling seed products not using the certification program.
4. To provide seed buyers with assurance that a designated seed product has met genetic purity standards related to a known description across lots and years of production, to facilitate product identification, and to provide a liaison between genetic suppliers and producers.

Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines

- I. Field inspection applications will be submitted to the agency identifying the field(s) to be inspected along with an agronomic description of the plant and seed. Products will be accepted as described.
- II. Field inspection will be performed by the agency using the same field sampling system used for certified seed production evaluating a minimum of 3,000 plants. General field conditions will be reported along with other information requested by the customer. The genetic standards for QA production will be the AOSCA genetic standards for the Certified class of seed of the crop being inspected (i.e. 0.5% allowable off type for soybeans).
- III. Post harvest samples will be submitted to the agency and tested for varietal purity, germination and physical purity. The varietal purity standard shall be the AOSCA genetic standards for the Certified class of seed of the crop being tested.
- IV. Sub-samples of the cleaned samples submitted to the agency will be placed in post control grow out tests for genetic purity evaluation.
- V. QA labels will be available from the agency for seed meeting the QA field and laboratory guidelines for genetic purity. The labels shall be green in color and have printed on them the QA logo (a registered trademark), the phrase "Quality Assurance", and "Member of the Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies". The QA label will be imprinted with kind, variety, brand, blend, or hybrid designation. The label will also contain a lot number and may contain a producer number or designation and the phrase "variety not stated", if applicable. Analysis information may be printed on the label upon request. The QA logo may be used by having it printed directly on seed bags or other documents.

- VI. The QA program may be used for “blends” with the following stipulations:
 - A. All seed used in QA blends must come from fields inspected under the QA program.
 - B. Prior to blending, all components of the blend must have met QA field and seed guidelines.
 - C. The minimum percentages of components in a QA blend shall be the same as for Certified blends.
 - D. Representative samples of QA blends as offered for sale must be submitted to the agency for seed analysis.
 - E. Sub-samples of all QA blends will be placed in agency post control grow out tests for genetic purity evaluation.
- VII. Bulk seed movement and sale guidelines shall be the same as for Certified seed.
- VIII. Approved conditioner guidelines (if applicable) shall be the same as for Certified seed.

Eligibility Requirements

- I. Eligibility for customer participation in the QA program is determined by the certifying agency.
- II. Product eligibility
 - A. Products initially entering the QA program must have a statement of origin signed by the applicant.
 - B. Products must also be accompanied by an adequate plant and seed description enabling the agency to make accurate and reliable field and seed evaluations. This description will be kept on file by the agency.
 - C. Non-exclusive products must be labeled under variety-not-stated provisions of applicable labeling laws and identified with brand designations.
 - D. Public varieties currently marketed as Certified seed are not eligible to be labeled under the QA program unless authorization is given by the originating institution.